

Senate Finance Committee

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FINANCE COMMITTEE TO LAUNCH “CHIP” REAUTHORIZATION

First hearing on renewal of State Children’s Health Insurance Program will be Feb. 1

Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate Finance Committee will begin work to reauthorize the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in a hearing on February 1, 2007, Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) have announced. Entitled “The Future of CHIP: Improving Health Care for America’s Children,” the hearing will examine the past successes and future challenges of the ten-year old program. CHIP provides health care coverage to more than six million American children. Its congressional authorization is set to expire September 30. Some states are expected to run short of CHIP funds prior to that date.

“It’s time to build on the enormous success of CHIP’s first ten years. I believe we can strengthen health care coverage for children with a robust renewal of CHIP,” said Baucus. **“The Finance Committee will look at how CHIP has worked for American families, and how to make it even better for the next generation of America’s families. CHIP has been a lifeline for children in my home state of Montana and across the country. I know all our colleagues will work together to make sure CHIP keeps our kids healthy.”**

Grassley said, **“The SCHIP program has been very successful. I look forward to working with Senator Baucus to improve the program so it covers as many children and gets as much bang for the buck as possible.”**

The Finance Committee has jurisdiction over the CHIP program. Baucus and Grassley have made CHIP renewal the committee’s top health care priority this year. A witness list for next week’s CHIP hearing will be published soon at <http://finance.senate.gov/sitepages/hearings.htm>.

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